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ABSTRACT

This report evaluates a program, in its second year of funding, which provides instruction in English as a second language (ESL) and native language arts to Hispanic students in a Bronx, New York high school. Bilingual instruction is also provided in social studies, mathematics, and science. The program was designed to develop career awareness and to encourage students to develop their bilingual skills as a potential asset in the business world. Program objectives were assessed in mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish (teacher-made tests), and in English language development via the Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test (CREST). Quantitative analysis of achievement data indicates that: (1) Overall, students met the program criterion of mastery of one CREST objective per month of instruction both semesters; (2) Those enrolled in Spanish language courses achieved the 65% passing objective; (3) In content-area subjects, only 11th grade students in science (fall) and 12th grade students in math (fall), social studies (fall), and science (fall and spring) were able to meet program objectives. The report recommends that students who are somewhat proficient in English be mainstreamed and assisted with tutoring. Further, it recommends that separate testing of the survival skills emphasized in the program be initiated, that greater efforts be made to involve parents, more materials be developed in mathematics and social studies; and that exploration be made of the failure of students to meet program objectives in content areas. (CG)

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SOUTH BRONX HIGH SCHOOL

CAREER AWARENESS/SURVIVAL SKILLS

BILINGUAL PROGRAM

1983-1984

OEA Evaluation Report

O.E.A. Evaluation Section Report

Robert Tobias, Administrator of Evaluation
Judith Stern Torres, Senior Manager

Grant Number: G00-820-2905

SOUTH BRONX HIGH SCHOOL

CAREER AWARENESS/SURVIVAL SKILLS

BILINGUAL PROGRAM

1983-1984

Principal:
Joseph De Jesus

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A SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This program, in its second year of funding, provided instruction in English as a second language (E.S.L.) and native language arts, in addition to bilingual instruction in social studies, mathematics, and science, to approximately 220 Spanish-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP) in grades nine through twelve. With the exception of one student, all program participants were native speakers of Spanish. Fifty percent of the program students were born in Puerto Rico, 18 percent in the United States, and 12 percent in the Dominican Republic. The remaining 20 percent was comprised of students from Mexico, and Central and South America. Of the students for whom information was reported, over half were overage for their grade.

The project was designed to develop students' career awareness and survival skills. They were encouraged to develop their bilingual skills and to view bilingualism as an asset in the business world.

Title VII funds supported administrative and support services positions. Curricular units stressing career awareness and survival skills were incorporated into E.S.L., social studies, science, mathematics, and economics classes. Curriculum materials were developed in Spanish for the Spanish business course, and other materials for mathematics and social studies were in the process of being translated. Development activities for staff members included monthly department meetings, demonstration lessons, and attendance at workshops, professional conferences, and university courses. Although many parents of participating students appeared reluctant to participate in group activities, program staff maintained frequent telephone contact with them. In addition, a bilingual newsletter was being prepared to inform parents about the operation of the program and its noteworthy activities.

Program objectives were assessed in English language development (Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test [Crest]) and mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish (teacher-made tests). Quantitative analysis of student achievement data indicates that:

--Overall, students met the program criterion of mastery of one CREST objective per month of instruction both semesters.

--The 65 percent passing objective was achieved overall by students enrolled in Spanish language courses.

--Only eleventh-grade students in science courses (fall) and twelfth graders in math (fall), social studies (fall), and science (fall and spring) were able to meet the program objectives in content-area subjects.

The following recommendations are aimed at improving the overall effectiveness of the program:

--Placing students who are somewhat proficient in English in a mainstream class when there are too few students to form a bilingual section of a required course. These students could be assisted by bilingual tutors to ensure their progress.

--Separate testing of the survival skills emphasized and developed in the program in content-area tests.

--Continuing efforts to promote greater parental participation. If possible, E.S.L. and high school equivalency courses might be offered for parents, and program staff should try to visit homes or community centers in an effort to establish the personal contacts which tend to be crucial in the Hispanic community.

--Continuing efforts to develop curricula in mathematics and social studies. The program might benefit from the curricula and material developed by other programs serving similar populations.

--Exploring possible reasons for student performance in the content areas, which fails to meet the program objective.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The production of this report, as of all Bilingual Education Evaluation Unit reports, is the result of a cooperative effort of regular staff and consultants. In addition to those whose names appear on the cover, Margaret Scorza has reviewed and corrected reports, coordinated the editing and production process, and contributed to the quality of the work in innumerable ways. She has been assisted by Ida Heyman, who integrated material into reports. Barbara Shore has written report summaries. Patricia Fitzpatrick has spent many hours creating, correcting, and maintaining data files. Finally, Joseph Rivera has worked intensively to produce, correct, duplicate, and disseminate reports. Without their able and faithful participation, the unit could not have handled such a large volume of work and still produced quality evaluation reports.

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South Bronx High School
Career Awareness/Survival Skills
Bilingual Program

Location:	701 St. Ann's Avenue Bronx, New York 10455
Year of Operation:	1983-1984, second year
Target Language:	Spanish
Number of Participants:	Fall, 232; Spring, 215
Principal:	Joseph De Jesus
Acting Project Director:	Sheila Fallick

I. INTRODUCTION

Currently in its second year of funding, Project CASS (Career Awareness/Survival Skills) is designed to develop the career awareness and survival skills of limited English proficient (LEP) students of Hispanic background. The program offers courses in English as a second language (E.S.L.) and native language arts (Spanish), and bilingual instruction in social studies, mathematics, and science. Students are encouraged to develop their bilingual skills and to view bilingualism as an asset in the business world. During the first two years of the project, emphasis has been placed on the development of curricula and resource materials related to career awareness and survival skills. These have been integrated with E.S.L., content-area, and language arts courses. Other major activities have included staff development and parental involvement.

South Bronx High School, a relatively small school with a total enrollment of 928 students, is located in one of the most economically

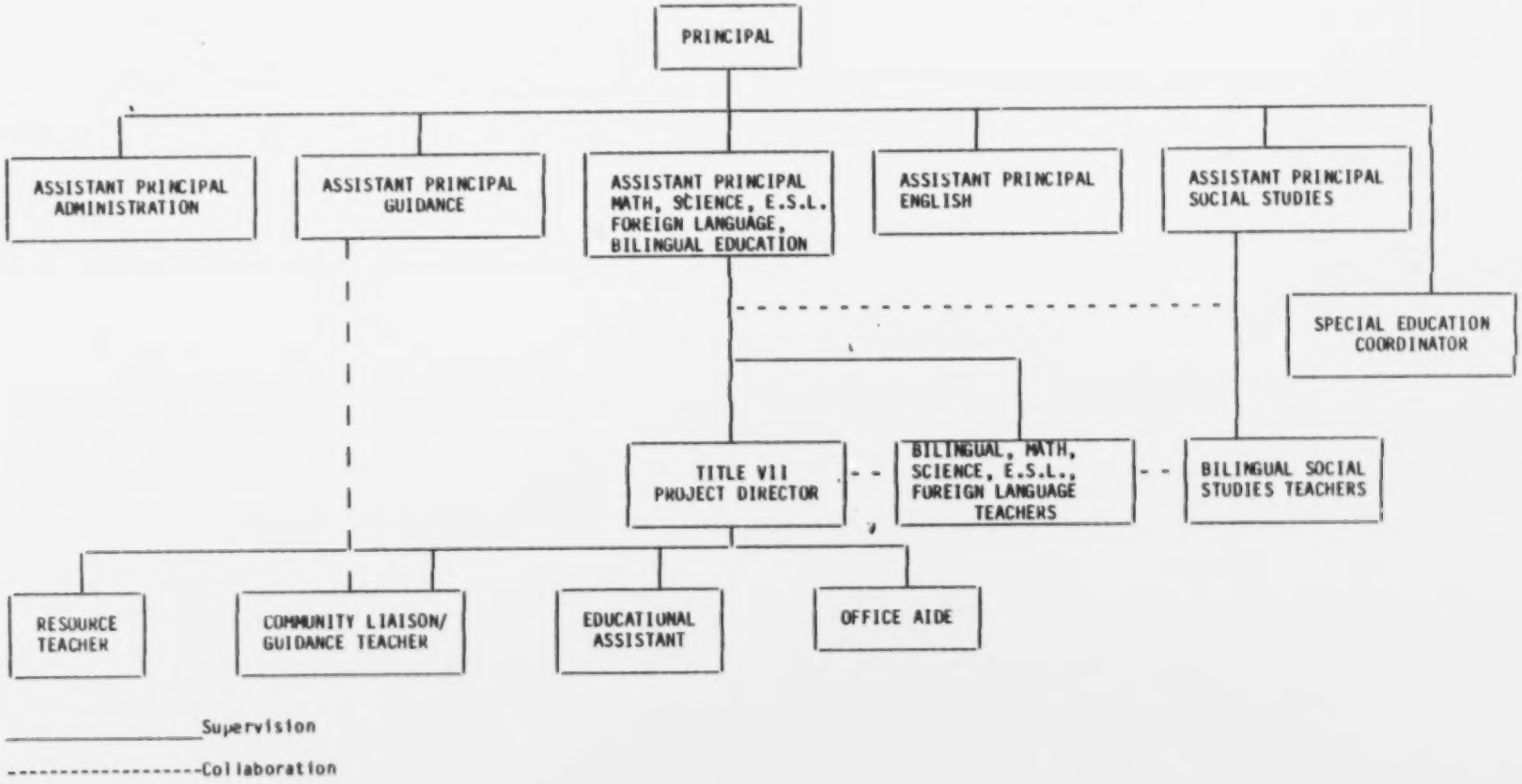
depressed areas of New York City. In 1977, the school was designated as the first bilingual (academic-comprehensive) high school, and has since served many LEP students of Hispanic origin.

The bilingual program, along with mathematics, science, foreign language, and E.S.L. programs, is directed by a bilingual assistant principal. The CASS project director works under the supervision of this assistant principal, coordinating activities and overseeing the daily operation of the program. Figure 1 illustrates the school and project organization. The responsibility for staff supervision falls on the assistant principals of the respective content areas. The project director supervises two curriculum specialists, an educational assistant, the grade advisor, and the project secretary.

The characteristics of the staff are presented in Appendix A. The entire teaching staff is bilingual to varying degrees and all, except one E.S.L. teacher, are certified in the subject they are teaching. The project director noted that "the teachers are deeply committed and enthusiastic about the program." More than half the staff has a master's degree, most with many years of teaching experience.

FIGURE 1

CASS Location Within the South Bronx High School Organization



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II. STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Hispanics comprise 77 percent (712 students) of the school population, while blacks make up 23 percent (212 students). There were three white students and one student of Portuguese origin in the 1983-84 year. Female students are in the majority at 60 percent of the total student population.

All students are eligible for the free lunch program. Spanish is the home language of 77 percent, and 32 percent are assessed as having limited English proficiency. Only 17 percent of the students are reading at or above grade level, with 13 percent demonstrating math skills at or above grade norms.

The CASS program served 232 students in the fall semester of 1983, and 215 in the spring of 1984. Except for one student, all program students for whom information was reported were native speakers of Spanish, half of whom were born in Puerto Rico. Eighteen percent were born in the United States; the remaining students were from the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Colombia, and Guatemala. One student was born in Portugal and spoke Portuguese. Table 1 shows program students reported by country of birth.

Project CASS serves students in grades nine through twelve. In 1983-84, the highest concentration of students was in grade nine and student numbers decreased as the grade level increased. There were more female students than males in all grades. The ratio of females to male program students is compatible with the student population as a whole

TABLE 1

Number and Percent of Program Students by

Language and Country of Birth

Language	Country of Birth	Number	Percent
Spanish	Puerto Rico	106	50
	Dominican Republic	26	12
	Mexico	3	1
	Honduras	13	6
	Guatemala	2	less than one
	El Salvador	8	4
	Colombia	3	1
	Ecuador	13	6
	United States	38	18
Portuguese	Portugal	1	less than one
	TOTAL	213	100

- All program students were native speakers of Spanish except one student who was a native speaker of Portuguese.
- One half of the program students were born in Puerto Rico.
- Thirty-eight students were born in the United States.

(see Table 2). Another feature of the program population is the number of students who are two or more years older than the expected age range for their grade. Of the students for whom information was reported, 58 percent were overage. Overage students outnumbered students at the expected age range in all grades (see Table 3). Table 4 shows the time students have spent in the bilingual program by grade.

TABLE 2

Number and Percent of Program Students by Sex and Grade

Grade	Number Male Students	Percent of Grade	Number Female Students	Percent of Grade	Total Number	Percent of All Students
9	33	36	58	64	91	44.2
10	23	40	35	60	58	28.2
11	5	13	33	87	38	18.4
12	4	21	15	79	19	9.2
TOTAL	65	32[a]	141	68[a]	206	100.0

[a]Percent of program students.

- Sixty-eight percent of all program students were female. Female students outnumbered male students in all grades.
- The greatest number of program students was in grade nine and the number of students per grade decreased as the grade increased.

TABLE 3

Number of Program Students by Age and Grade

Age	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
14	11	0	0	0	11
15	22	12	0	0	34
16	26	12	10	1	49
17	25	15	15	0	55
18	5	10	14	4	33
19	1	4	3	6	14
20	0	1	3	2	6
21	0	0	0	2	2
22	0	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	91	57	38	19	205
Overage Students					
Number	57	30	20	11	118
Percent	63	52	53	58	57

Note. Shaded boxes indicate expected age range for grade.

- The majority of all program students were overage for their grade (57 percent).
- In each grade there were more overage students than students at the expected age range.
- The highest percentage of overage students was in grade nine.

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TABLE 4

Time Spent in the Bilingual Program[a]

(As of June 1984)

Time Spent in Bilingual Program	Number of Students Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
<1 Academic Year	22	3	5	0	30
1 Academic Year	64	22	11	3	100
2 Academic Years	7	28	11	4	50
3 Academic Years[b]	4	4	11	5	24
4 Academic Years[b]	0	2	1	5	8
5 Academic Years[b]	0	0	1	2	3
TOTAL	97	59	40	19	215

[a]Rounded to the nearest year.

[b]Reflects previous participation in other bilingual program.

- One hundred thirty students (60 percent) have been in the program one year or less.

III. FINDINGS

The evaluation findings are based on the examination of program material and records, a site visit, interviews with relevant personnel, and standardized test results. A member of the evaluation team visited the school for two days.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Objective 1: Between October 1983 and May 1984, students participating in E.S.L. classes will master an average of one curricular objective per month of instruction.

E.S.L. classes, as well as E.S.L. reading classes, are offered exclusively for program students on five levels. Classes are relatively small, averaging 18 students per class. Two paraprofessionals assist in E.S.L. classes. Table 5 presents a listing of the E.S.L. offerings in the fall and spring.

The curriculum used in these classes was developed in accordance with the Bronx superintendent's guidelines. In addition, a number of CASS units have been incorporated into the E.S.L. curriculum, including information-giving, library skills, telephone communication skills, and letter writing. A member of the evaluation team visited an E.S.L. class for English-dominant and transitional tenth- and eleventh-grade students (LEDS) in which the class was developing skills in reading labels commonly found on grocery store products.

TABLE 5

Instruction in English as a Second Language and English Reading

Course Title and Level	Number of Classes		Average Register		Class Periods Per Week	Paraprofessional Assistance
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring		
E.S.L. 1	2	1	20	19	10	Yes
E.S.L. 2	1	2	19	15	10	Yes
E.S.L. 3	1	1	19	17	10	No
E.S.L. 4	1	1	16	15	10	Yes
E.S.L. 5	1	1	16	12	5	Yes
E.S.L. Reading 1	1	1	20	19	5	Yes
E.S.L. Reading 2	1	1	19	24	5	No
E.S.L. Reading 3	1	1	19	17	5	Yes
E.S.L. Reading 4	1	1	16	15	5	Yes
E.S.L. Reading 5	1	1	16	12	5	No
LEDS*	2	3	20	25	5	Yes

*E.S.L. for English-dominant and transitional students.

- For most E.S.L. levels, the program offers one class per semester with an enrollment ranging from 12 to 25 students and paraprofessional assistance.
- The lower level classes, one through four, meet 10 periods weekly, while the higher levels meet five periods weekly.

Student Achievement in English as a Second Language

The assessment instrument used for measuring achievement in this area was the Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test (CREST). The CREST was developed by the New York City Public Schools to measure mastery of instructional objectives of the E.S.L. curricula at the high school level. There are four items for each objective, and mastery of an objective is achieved when three of the items are answered correctly. The test has three levels: beginning (I), intermediate (II), and advanced (III). The maximum score on Levels I and II is 25, while the maximum score on Level III is 15.

Mean differences between pretest and posttest are calculated to represent the gain score, and an index which represents the number of objectives mastered per month is computed. Extensive information on CREST objectives and psychometric properties appears in the Technical Manual, New York City English as a Second Language Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test.*

The CREST was administered at the beginning and end of both the fall and spring semesters. Table 6 presents the test results for students who were pretested and posttested with the same level during each semester. Complete data on both test administrations were available for 116 students in the fall semester and for 131 students in the spring semester. Examination of Table 6 reveals that in the fall, students mastered an average of approximately 1.1 CREST objectives per month, and in the spring they mastered an average of 1.8 objectives per month.

*Board of Education of the City of New York, Division of High Schools, 1978.

Overall, the results meet the criterion established by the program objective (an average of one objective mastered per month of treatment).

The highest gains occurred among students tested at Levels I and II during the spring semester. Level III students in spring were the only group not to meet the overall objective, partly because it seems to take longer to master an objective at that level. The proposed objective assumes that progress in the acquisition of syntactic skills is linear. The lower achievement of Level III students frequently found in programs throughout New York City suggests that it is not.

TABLE 6

Results of the Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test

(Program Students Pretested and Posttested on the Same Test Level)

Test Level	Number of Students	Average Number of Objectives Mastered Pre	Post	Objectives Mastered*	Average Months of Treatment	Objectives Mastered Per Month
			Fall			
I	39	9.1	12.7	3.6	2.9	1.2
II	27	11.0	14.7	3.7	3.0	1.2
III	50	9.0	11.7	2.7	2.9	1.0
TOTAL	116	9.7	13.0	3.4	2.9	1.1
			Spring			
I	38	10.3	15.7	5.4	2.9	1.9
II	27	14.4	19.5	5.1	2.8	1.8
III	66	11.6	13.3	1.7	2.9	0.6
TOTAL	131	12.1	16.2	4.1	2.9	1.8

*Posttest minus pretest.

- Students mastered 1.1 objectives per month of instruction in the fall, and 1.8 objectives per month of instruction in the spring.
- Overall, the results meet the criterion established by the program objective (an average of one objective mastered per month of treatment).

CONTENT-AREA COURSES

Objective 2: Sixty-five percent of program students enrolled in content-area classes (mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish) will pass them.

Spanish language instruction is offered to both program and non-program students on eight levels. In addition, a business Spanish course is offered on two levels to native speakers. All classes were held for five periods each week and used a wide variety of materials for instruction. Table 7 presents the number of Spanish language classes and their average register for the fall and spring.

TABLE 7

Instruction in the Native Language[a]

Course Title and Level	Number of Classes		Average Register		Is Class for Program Students Exclusively?
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	
Spanish 1/2	2	2	37	25	No
Spanish 3/4	2	2	33	36	No
Spanish 3X	2	-	20	--	Yes
Spanish 5/6	2	2	21	33	No
Spanish 5X	1	-	22	--	Yes
Spanish 7/8	2	1	27	28	Yes
Business Spanish 1/2	2	2	41	39	No

[a]Paraprofessional assistance is not available in these classes.

Bilingual courses are offered exclusively to program students in mathematics, science, and social studies at all grade levels five periods each week. According to the project director, there is a gradual transition from Spanish to English in most of these courses. For example, in the fall term of biology, English was used 20 percent of the time for instruction, and Spanish 80 percent. In the spring biology course, English was used 25 percent of the time. In American studies classes, English was used approximately 30 percent of the time. These two courses are said to enroll a larger number of students in intermediate or advanced levels of E.S.L. who are in this way being prepared to enter the mainstream.

The program's mainstreaming policy is also reflected by the numbers of students at higher E.S.L. levels enrolled in content-area courses given in English. There was a steady increase in the numbers of students taking content-area courses in English as their E.S.L. proficiency increased. In both the fall and spring, the majority of students taking content-area courses in English were at the transitional E.S.L. level. For classes given in Spanish, the reverse pattern was true. Most program students taking content-area courses in Spanish were at the beginning E.S.L. level.

A member of the evaluation team observed an algebra class with 18 students present. The class was conducted entirely in Spanish and all exchanges between the teacher and students and students themselves were in the native language. While the students worked on factoring problems, a paraprofessional worked with individual students on specific areas of difficulty.

Because of the small size of the school and limited space, it is not always possible to schedule all the courses needed by students in the bilingual program. Sometimes a class is not offered during a particular semester because of limited enrollment or a scheduling conflict.

Table 8 presents the content-area subjects offered to students in the fall and spring.

TABLE 8

Bilingual Instruction in Subject Areas

Course Title	Number of Classes		Average Register		Language(s) of Instruction	Paraprofessional Assistance
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring		
Global History 1/2	3	2	30	29	100% Spanish	Yes
Global History 3	1	-	20	--	70% Spanish 30% English	No
American Studies 2/1	1	2	22	20	70% Spanish 30% English	No
Algebra 1	1	-	28	--	100% Spanish	No
Algebra 2	1	1	18	16	100% Spanish	No/Yes
Fund. Math 1	2	1	20	26	100% Spanish	Yes
Fund. Math 2	1	1	17	32	100% Spanish	No/Yes
Fund. Math 3	-	1	--	17	100% Spanish	Yes
Consumer Economics	-	1	--	18	75% Spanish 25% English	No
General Science 1/2	2	2	26	23	100% Spanish	Yes
Biology 1/2	1	1	33	12	80% Span/20% Eng 75% Span/25% Eng	No
Regents Bio. 1/2	1	1	20	24	80% Span/20% Eng 75% Span/25% Eng	Yes

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Student Achievement in Content Areas

To assess the objectives in mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish courses, students' passing rates were computed by subject area and by grade. Table 9 contains the number of students reported as taking the relevant courses and the percent passing for fall and for spring courses separately.

Overall, the 65 percent passing objective was surpassed in Spanish both semesters, but was not achieved in mathematics, science, or social studies. When examined by grade, performance in mathematics, science, and social studies improved steadily with each successive grade during the fall semester and, overall, similar tendencies were shown in the spring semester. The objective was met by twelfth graders in all areas during the fall, and also in science and Spanish during the spring. Eleventh graders also surpassed the objective in science and Spanish in the fall. However, since more than 74 percent of the students reported were ninth and tenth graders, who had lower achievement rates, the program objective for content areas was not met.

TABLE 9

Number of Program Students Attending Courses and Percent Passing Teacher-Made Examinations in Content-Area Subjects

Content Area	Grade 9 N	Grade 9 % Passing	Grade 10 N	Grade 10 % Passing	Grade 11 N	Grade 11 % Passing	Grade 12 N	Grade 12 % Passing	Total N	Total % Passing
				Fall						
Mathematics	55	29.1	41	36.6	27	48.1	13	69.2	136	39.0
Science	49	28.6	35	45.7	16	68.8	11	90.9	111	45.9
Social Studies	58	25.9	42	54.8	24	62.5	15	80.0	139	46.8
Spanish	89	67.4	46	60.8	22	72.7	18	83.3	175	68.0
				Spring						
Mathematics	75	34.7	43	55.8	26	38.5	9	55.6	153	42.5
Science	56	25.0	34	58.8	18	44.4	11	72.7	119	42.0
Social Studies	73	23.3	42	40.5	33	54.5	8	62.5	156	36.5
Spanish	86	72.0	42	66.6	23	56.5	19	84.2	170	70.0

Note: Mathematics courses include fundamental math, geometry, Regents Competency Test (R.C.T.) preparation, computer programming, and business math. Science courses include general science and physics. Social studies includes world geography/culture, world/global history, and economics. Spanish courses range from native language level 4 through 7, and business Spanish.

CAREER AWARENESS

Objective 3: Eighty percent of the students participating in career awareness activities will improve their knowledge of careers and survival/life skills.

Career and survival/life skills are taught in both E.S.L. and content-area courses. A member of the evaluation team observed students in a bilingual algebra class learning, in Spanish, how to compute percentages and proportions in budgeting family income. Career Day, held in the spring term, offers program students an opportunity to relate CASS concepts learned in classes to various trades and professions.

In addition, program students who have sufficient proficiency in English may enroll in several specialized credit and non-credit courses offered by the school. These courses include mathematics lab, business mathematics, chemistry, typing, art, music, graphic arts, record keeping, and dance and were held for five periods each week.

Instructional offerings emphasize clerical skills as well as awareness of opportunities and requirements for the professions.

Student Growth in Career Awareness

The project proposed to assess student outcomes in career awareness activities as measured by scores on teacher-made tests in relevant courses. However, because career awareness activities are incorporated in E.S.L. and subject matter classes, the students' knowledge of careers and survival/life skills was not assessed independently of other skills required in these classes. Consequently, this objective can not be measured as proposed.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Objective 4: At least one curriculum unit will be developed or identified in each of the following areas: exploring careers, school survival skills, job survival skills, and community/life skills.

Several CASS curricular units have been designed and incorporated into courses. Information-giving, library, telephone communication, and letter writing skills have been incorporated into E.S.L. classes. Map reading and chart interpretation units have been identified and emphasized in social studies and science. Study skills development has been integrated with the native language arts curriculum. A unit on banking has been incorporated into the economics class, and a unit on consumer math skills has been introduced into fundamental math classes. Curriculum materials in Spanish have been developed and are now in place for the business Spanish course. Other materials for math and social studies are being translated and are expected to be ready for use in the fall, 1984 term. The project has met its curriculum development objective.

STAFF TRAINING

Objective 5: All teachers serving participating students will receive training in the use of developed or identified curriculum materials.

All program teachers attended monthly departmental meetings with the assistant principal for bilingual programs in which professional topics were discussed regularly. E.S.L. teachers also attended workshops on new approaches to E.S.L. teaching and on improving the use of the Odyssey textbook. The program director and assistant principal provided demonstration lessons as well as individual assistance to teachers throughout the year.

E.S.L. teachers and educational assistants attended E.S.L. training workshops offered by the Chapter I office. The project director and the resource teacher attended a health careers conference at Northeastern University. The project director also attended the State Association for Bilingual Education (SABE) conference in Liberty, New York, where she attended workshops on career training in bilingual education. The assistant principal attended the Title VII management conference in Washington, D.C. and the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

Objective 6: By June of 1984, at least two teachers will take six credits at colleges or universities in areas related to E.S.L., bilingual education, or career education.

One E.S.L. teacher took two courses in the spring at New York University, one in the structure of American English, the other in theory and practice of E.S.L. teaching. In the fall of 1983, educational assistants took courses at Mercy College in Teaching English as a Second Language, tests and measurement, creative arts for children, and comparative Romance linguistics.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Objective 7: Parents of participating students will be informed as to program activities, relevant aspects of school rules and activities, and student progress by means of the following:

--an orientation session;
--at least two informative flyers;
--telephone contacts for academic warnings and disciplinary problems, as the need arises.

This objective was partly achieved. The project director and the community liaison/guidance teacher have been in frequent contact with parents by telephone. The guidance teacher has worked closely with the Parents' Association to encourage more parents to participate in the program.

According to the project director, many parents appear reluctant to attend meetings. Parental involvement in the bilingual program was reported by administrators to be about the same as for mainstream programs. A bilingual newsletter was being prepared in the spring term to inform parents about the operation of the bilingual program and its noteworthy activities.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The CASS bilingual program is completing its second year with a high degree of enthusiasm on the part of school staff and students. The relatively small size of South Bronx High School allows for frequent communication among members of the teaching and administrative staffs. The grade advisor knows all program students personally, and students visit the bilingual office frequently to talk with the project director about academic and personal matters.

Many students in the program excel academically. For example, this year, 11 of the top 20 students in the graduating class had participated in the CASS program. Fourteen students who were part of the bilingual program received special honors at graduation, including awards for excellence in chemistry, mathematics, physics, and attendance. All program students who have taken Regents' exams have passed them.

However, the project is far from meeting its objective for student achievement in the content areas. While it aims at a 65 percent passing rate, students' performance may be as low as 37 percent passing social studies or 39 percent passing math. This situation calls for attention to seek possible explanations.

Materials in Spanish are still needed in some areas, particularly in mathematics and social studies. Plans are underway to develop these, or to translate materials into Spanish. Efforts are also continuing to incorporate more career and survival skills into regular course offerings.

The program has not shown any increase of parental involvement over mainstream programs. It is likely that many parents work during the day

and do not have much time or energy left for evening meetings. Although it was suggested that parents do not enjoy group activity, it may also be the case that many Hispanic parents, especially new arrivals, feel uncomfortable in the institutional setting of the school, and are not fully aware of the rules for appropriate and effective social behavior when interacting with professionals in this setting.

The evaluation team makes the following recommendations:

1. During semesters in which the number of students in need of required courses is too low to form a section, the program might explore placing students who are somewhat proficient in English in the mainstream class. These students could be assisted by bilingual tutors to ensure that they can benefit from instruction provided in English and do not fall behind.

2. Testing in the content areas might include the separate testing of the survival skills emphasized and developed in the CASS program.

3. A continued effort should be made to ensure more parental participation. Activities such as the newsletter are commendable. E.S.L. and high school equivalency classes might be offered to parents if resources were available. If possible, program staff should try to visit homes or community centers (such as social clubs) where program parents are active, in order to establish the kinds of personal contacts that are so important in most Hispanic communities.

4. The program should continue its efforts to develop curricula in the areas cited (mathematics and social studies). The program might

seek other projects serving similar populations in similar ways in order to benefit from the curricula and materials already developed and in use.

5. Given the students' low passing rates in the content areas, the project might explore possible reasons for these results. It might focus on teachers' standards for student performance in relation to student ability, the program objective in relation to student ability, and the relation between what is taught and what is tested.

V. APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Characteristics of the CASS Bilingual Staff

Positions	Degree	Certification	Years Teaching Experience
Assistant Principal	M.A.	Supervision/Math	12
Acting Project Director	M.A.	E.S.L./French/Spanish	16
Title VII Resource Teacher	M.A.	Spanish	7
Community Liaison/Guidance Teacher	M.A.	Biology/General Service	16
Educational Assistant (Title VII)	University Degree, El Salvador	-	19
E.S.L. Teacher	M.A.	E.S.L.	6
E.S.L. Teacher	M.A.	E.S.L./Common Branches	10
E.S.L. Teacher	M.A.	E.S.L./French/Social Studies	21
E.S.L. Teacher	B.A.	French	4
Spanish Teacher	M.A.	Spanish	14
Spanish Teacher	M.A.	Spanish	3
Bilingual Science Teacher	B.S.	Bilingual General Science/Biology	5
Bilingual Math Teacher	B.A.	Bilingual Math	11
Bilingual Math Teacher	B.S.	Math	1
Bilingual Social Studies	Ph.D.	Bilingual Social Studies/Spanish	14
Educational Assistant	-	-	14
Educational Assistant	-	-	4